ment, the proposal will be considered further.

(c) Question does not arise.

Potato cultivation during Ninth Plan

917. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to increase potato cultivation during Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the State-wise target set therefor;

(c) whether any scheme has been proposed for the purpose and central assistance would be extended to the State Governments; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) State-wise targets have not been set for IX Plan.

(c) and (d) There is no separate scheme for potato cultivation. However, a scheme for integrated development of vegetables including root & tuber crops covering potato, with an outlay of Rs. 7500 lakh has been proposed. Under the scheme assistance would be extended to set up the true Potato Seed/seedling tuber production centres in the States and for promoting its cultivation through area expansion, distribution of minikits and laying out of demonstration plots.

Agricultural land in Orissa

918. SHRI K.M. SAIMULLAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that alarming emergency is taking place in the Kalahandi district of Orissa where agricultural land is grappled by money lenders;

(b) whether it is a fact that the people of Kalahandi district are being reduced to abject poverty, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the plans of Government to cope up with the misery of the people of the district, alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) As per the report received from the Government of Orissa, there is no alarming emergency situation of grappling the agricultural land in Kalahandi district.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Various programmes such as IRDP/ JRY/EAS/KBK and other anti-poverty and welfare programmes are implemented in the district for the benefit of the people who are below the poverty line. Labour intensive works are undertaken and a sizeable number of people are getting emergency feeding. As and when required, Gratuitors Relief Cards are issued to the distressed people.

Foodgrains loss due to land degradation and pollution

919. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study has been made by Government to assess the estimated annual loss of foodgrains output in the country due to land degradation and damage to crop from pollution;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the estimated annual degradation of land with areas where land degradation is accounted to be highest;

(c) the estimated annual loss in foodgrains output due to crop pollution; and

(d) the strategy, if any, formulated by Government to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) No systematic studies have been undertaken to assess the annual degradation of land